

Break the ROI Barrier

5 Steps to Reposition Security as a Business Driver



Executive Overview

In today's digital landscape, cybersecurity has become a critical component of business operations. Yet, security teams often find themselves in a paradoxical position: essential to the organization's well-being, but struggling to demonstrate their value in tangible, financial terms. **This challenge of proving Return on Investment (ROI) for security programs is not just a minor inconvenience — it's a significant hurdle that can impact an organization's strategic direction and top line.**

Security teams have long battled the perception of being the "Department of No," a reputation that stems from their necessary role in risk mitigation and compliance. This image often overshadows their potential as strategic business enablers.

The irony is palpable: while security measures are implemented to protect and facilitate business growth, they are frequently viewed as obstacles to progress and innovation.

One of the most visible manifestations of this struggle is in the sales cycle. As businesses increasingly rely on digital platforms and data-driven solutions, security reviews have become an integral part of the procurement process. However, these reviews often lead to prolonged back-and-forth exchanges, significantly slowing down prospective deals. This delay not only affects revenue generation but can also strain relationships with potential clients and partners — negatively impacting customer trust.

The challenge of demonstrating security's value is becoming more pressing. With the average cost of a data breach reaching nearly \$5 million in the US, security leaders are under increasing pressure to justify their budgets and prove their worth to the organization.

In this guide, we'll discuss strategies and share real customer success stories for repositioning security as a strategic business enabler rather than a necessary evil. By addressing these issues head-on, we aim to help security teams bridge the gap between security operations and business objectives, paving the way for a more integrated and value-driven approach to cybersecurity in the modern enterprise.



TL:DR

STEP ONE: Instill a cultural shift: Changing security's value with internal stakeholders

STEP TWO: Tie security's streamlined review process to deal acceleration and closed won revenue

STEP THREE: Prioritize security reviews for high priority, open pipeline deals

STEP FOUR: Leverage a Trust Center as a Lead Driver for the Business

STEP FIVE: Full speed ahead — driving time to value across the business

STEP ONE: Instill a cultural shift: Changing security's value with internal stakeholders



To proactively demonstrate Asana's commitment to safeguarding customer data, the Sales and Security Risk teams joined forces to reimagine how and when security joined the sales conversation during active deals.

Their goal: minimize last-minute security review requests and reduce the likelihood that a deal will be blocked due to a security review.

From Blocker to Business Enabler

Asana's mission is to help humanity thrive by enabling the world's teams to work together effortlessly. With 1,782 employees, the company understands that organizational alignment and collaboration are key to achieving its goals.

Historically, communicating the company's commitment to security and trust was a tedious and time-consuming effort. Prospective customers would regularly send lengthy custom questionnaires to be completed by the Security Risk team, often at the very end of the deal cycle, delaying the signing of contracts. The Sales team consistently felt the pain of cobbling together critical security information as quickly as possible and potentially compromising the customer experience.

Meanwhile, the Security Risk team felt the burden of responding to ad hoc questions and an onslaught of questionnaires, taking them away from more strategic projects and conversations with customers.

Something had to change.

Asana invested in an industry leading Trust Center to showcase their security and trust posture transparently and securely with external prospects. The Trust Center also facilitates a seamless NDA approval process through robust CRM integrations, minimizing back-and-forth interactions among Sales, prospective buyers, and the Security team — no login required. This streamlined process created a "zero-friction" program which vastly improved the experience for internal and external stakeholders alike.

The Sales team also began sharing the Trust Center early in the deal cycle to get ahead of inevitable security reviews as they approached closing. Via the integration with Salesforce, the security review process is now a part of the Sales team's regular workflow. Salespeople can provide access to the Trust Center in just one click, reducing complexity and increasing seller control and insight into buyer engagement with security related content.

"As we partner more closely with enterprise organizations, security plays a direct role in helping close deals and helping maintain relationships," said Monica Smith, Head of Security Risk and Compliance at Asana. "A lot of orgs will have security requirements as part of their due diligence and will require us to do a security audit... The pace at which that's moving requires us to think intelligently about how we're going to scale our security program with the limited resources."



“ In many cases, security is the most important feature. It often comes up right at the end in the contract phase, when you're trying to close the deal. That's not the time to be talking about the most critical feature of your product — it's at the very beginning.”

Brian Tobin, Security Technical Program Manager, Asana

Asana's Results

24,500+

Views of Asana's Trust Center in its first 4 months post launch

10x

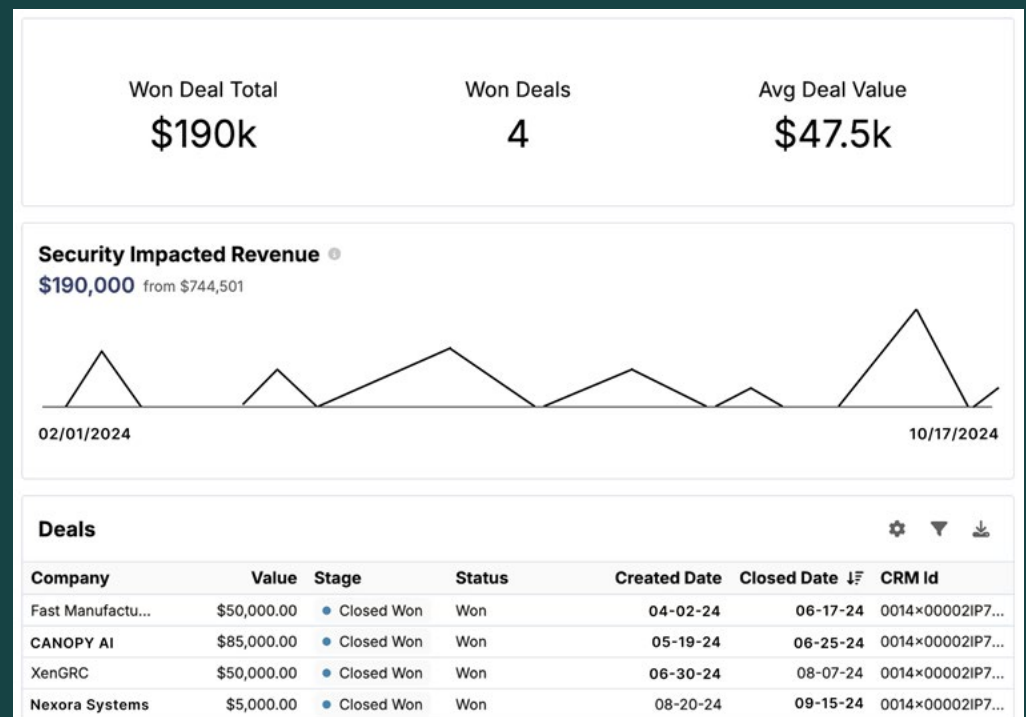
faster turnaround to share trust documentation

STEP TWO: Tie security's streamlined review process to deal acceleration and closed won revenue

Security teams can leverage advanced analytics to demonstrate the tangible impact of their streamlined security review process on deal acceleration and closed-won deals. By tracking key metrics such as reduction in deal cycle times and improvements in win rates with real-time monitoring, security professionals can quantify their direct contribution to revenue growth.

Additionally, insights into buyer engagement with security documentation help identify which materials are most effective in building trust and expediting the sales process.

By presenting these data-driven insights to leadership, security teams can clearly demonstrate their contribution to the top line, improved efficiency, and the growth of customer trust.



Sample "Security Enabled Closed Won" Analytics Dashboard from SafeBase — The Trust Center Platform.



Saving time, building trust, and driving deals forward

Chris Castaldo, CISO at Crossbeam, faced the constant challenge of balancing his critical responsibilities with the relentless influx of time-consuming security questionnaires. These lengthy documents, often containing hundreds or thousands of repetitive questions, arrived frequently from the sales team with urgent deadlines, disrupting his workflow and hindering his ability to focus on strategic priorities.

Castaldo launched a Trust Center, and very quickly saw the impact.



Chris Castaldo
CISO, Crossbeam

“ Besides saving myself and our sales team time, it has increased customer confidence in our platform and shows one of our core values very transparently — Trust is Our Business. Our Security Portal puts that on display for all to see.”

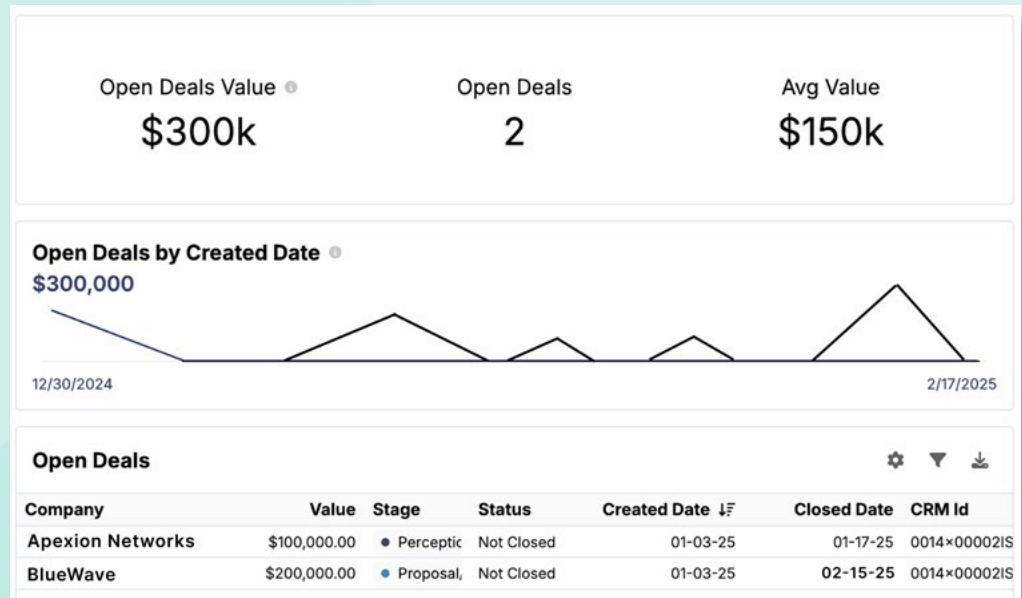
The Sales team also saw immediate results. They could now proactively encourage prospects to start the security review process at the beginning of the sales cycle by sending the Trust Center URL to prospects as soon as a new opportunity was created.

The Results

7 day
reduction in
sales cycle

98%
reduction in
inbound Questionnaires

STEP THREE: Prioritize security reviews for high priority, open pipeline deals



Sample “Open Pipeline Deals” Analytics Dashboard from SafeBase leveraging the robust Salesforce integration to pull deal size, detail, and closing information into view.

Leveraging analytic dashboards and CRM synchronization empowers security teams to strategically prioritize open pipeline deals requiring security reviews and significantly accelerates the sales process. This data-driven approach unlocks more efficient allocation of resources to high-priority deals based on revenue size or anticipated close date. As a result, security teams can deliver faster, more targeted impact to enable topline revenue and position themselves as a true partner to Sales.

STEP FOUR: Leverage a Trust Center as a Lead Driver for the Business

A Trust Center serves a dual purpose that extends beyond its primary function of providing security artifacts to existing customers and prospects. It has emerged as a powerful lead generation driver for businesses, capitalizing on the growing trend of prospects conducting due diligence before initiating formal sales processes. By requiring visitors to enter their email addresses to gain secure access to security information, Trust Centers create a valuable touchpoint for high intent prospects who are proactively evaluating a company's data security practices.

This effective lead generation vehicle further solidifies the strategic alliance between security and sales, and strengthens Security's position as a crucial component of overall business strategy.



“It’s not just for the existing customers and renewals. It’s the lead gen which was a big win that nobody thought a Trust Center could potentially offer.”

Nithya Ram, Head of Compliance and Privacy, Narvar



STEP FIVE: Full speed ahead — driving time to value across the business

The concept of “time to value” has become increasingly critical, especially when implementing new technology for already stretched teams. Security professionals, in particular, face the dual challenge of adopting new tools to boost productivity while maintaining robust security measures. Trust Center benefits extend beyond just Security alone. Legal, HR, Sales, and more see the impact of streamlined NDA approvals, policy reviews, and in-app notifications for internal team members to quickly connect with SMEs across the company.

Swift implementation, an intuitive interface, and tangible value helps drive adoption and minimize disruption — as was seen at Open Space Labs when they launched their SafeBase Trust Center.

After initial setup, Legal was able to hand over SafeBase administration to the deal desk team, significantly reducing their day-to-day involvement outside of signing NDAs via the Ironclad integration, and leveraging analytic dashboards for data-backed reporting. Legal also benefitted from the ability to obtain and track click-through NDAs before granting access, the option for manual approval when necessary, and the intuitive user interface and navigation which made the platform easy to use for both internal teams and external stakeholders.

Quick adoption led to immediate time to value.



“ Our first sales win using Safebase after going live - time to value - is 16 days.”

Perry Li, Director - Legal, Open Space Labs
www.openspace.ai



Conclusion

The transformation of security teams from perceived roadblocks to recognized business enablers is not just desirable — it’s imperative for modern enterprises. By adopting a strategic approach that aligns security initiatives with business objectives, security teams can demonstrate significant value and foster competitive advantage.

The future of cybersecurity lies not in being the “Department of No,” but in becoming the “Department of Know” — knowing how to enable business safely, efficiently, and profitably.



Built by trust-obsessed people for trust-minded organizations

The SafeBase Trust Center Platform streamlines the security review process by providing centralized, real-time access to up to date security and trust posture, compliance, and related documentation. Self-serve reviews are enabled with unified questionnaire management, and any remaining inbound questionnaires are answered by AI Questionnaire Assistance which cites Trust Center and Knowledge Base content — synced daily to ensure accuracy.

Robust permissioning helps teams confidently control access, and CRM integrations bring security reviews into go-to-market workflows driving quicker deals and higher win rates.

SafeBase collaboration features assigns questions to subject matter experts, specifies answer due dates, and notifies designated question owners to deliver a frictionless review process.

Analytics dashboards highlight security influenced revenue and share engagement data to inform your team on areas of focus for maximum impact.

Most importantly, your data never leaves your own private data store, and we never use it to train the AI. AI Questionnaire Assistance only pulls information to answer questionnaires with accuracy and speed.

Learn more at safebase.io

Ready to build customer trust, gain actionable insights, and prove security ROI with a SafeBase Trust Center Platform?

[Book a Demo](#)